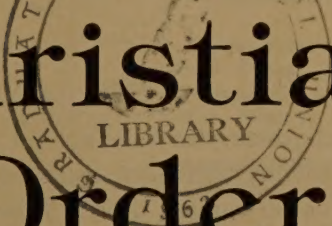


MAR 30 1982

Christian Order



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Please

May I ask those who have not yet replied to my letter reminding them that their subscriptions are due, to do so without delay. Now that postage costs have risen once again, my ability to keep the price of *Christian Order* at its present level depends, not only on your generosity, but on the rapidity with which renewals are sent in. Please be so very kind as to renew whenever possible on the first reminder. May I thank very much the many who have done so, and done so in the most generous fashion.

—Paul Crane, S.J.

Cum Permissu Superiorum

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Christian Order is a magazine devoted to Catholic Social Teaching and incisive comment on current affairs in Church and State; at home and abroad; in the political, social and industrial fields. It is published ten times a year.

It is published by Father Paul Crane, S.J., from 65, Belgrave Rd., London S.W.1V, 2BG. This is the sole postal address to which all communications concerning *Christian Order* should be sent.

Christian Order is obtainable only by subscription and from this address. In the case of those desiring more than one copy, these are obtainable at the subscription rate and should be paid for in advance

The annual subscription to *Christian Order* is £3 in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland; \$5.00 in the United States, Canada and Australia; elsewhere according to the approximate sterling rate of exchange, in the currency of the country concerned or any convenient currency.

Air-mail rates as follows :

U.S.A., Canada

India, etc.—£6, U.S. \$15

Australia—£7, A. \$15

N. Zealand—£7, N.Z. \$15

Christian Order

EDITED BY

Paul Crane SJ

VOLUME 23

MARCH

NO. 3

A Question of Choice

THE EDITOR

QUOS Deus vult perdere, prius dementat: "Whom the Gods would destroy, they first send mad". The saying is a very old one. In the case of the one, true God it is not a matter of sending anyone mad deliberately. It is, quite simply, that the condition of man's preservation morally as a human being—and that of any society composed of himself and his fellows—is that he should use his understanding and will—the powers that are his as a human being—to hold to God's Law in his regard. Man's glory which is found in his freedom—the power of choosing that God has given him—is thus his heaviest charge, for he is free to accept God's law or reject it. It is in the very nature of his freedom, which sets him in the image of God, that this should be so; that he should have it in him as a *human* being to reject God's law in his regard or to accept it. As the great G. K. Chesterton said, so briefly and so brutally but so truly, man cannot be free to choose Heaven except that he be free to choose Hell. Were God so to condition man that he could not help but choose Heaven, were He to predetermine man in this way, he would no longer be man. Precisely because he is man, he can scale the heights, but he cannot do that except that he also have it in him to consign himself to the depths. His greatest glory, as I have just said, is thus his heaviest charge. That is the way it is with him. To wish for any-

thing else is to indulge in the somewhat fanciful game of wanting to have one's cake and, at the same time, eat it as well, an altogether absurd proceeding when you come to think of it.

To be truly himself, then, man must hold to God's Law. To this he is obliged by reason of his dependence on God; but he is free, because he is a human being, to reject this obligation. The consequence of this rejection is confusion and chaos of the type that we have in western society today—within men themselves and within the society of which they form a part. The chaos has come because men have lost sight of God. Having done so, they have lost sight of God's Law. Which means, inevitably, that they have become a law unto themselves. Examples of the ensuing chaos and confusion are too numerous to enumerate here at any length. Some few will suffice.

One thinks of the ugly absurdity that crowds over the production of test-tube babies, whilst butchering the naturally born by the hundred thousand in their mother's womb. Or again, of the derogation of Christian values in school accompanied by the horror-stricken reaction of the public to the crime, the violence and the immorality, which the derogation inevitably produces; of the remedy proposed for this situation, which is said to lie in the production of more social workers, more police and bigger and better gaols, rather than in the teaching of those very values whose discarding is the basic cause of the troubles that plague us today. One could go on, but why do so? Surely the nonsense that afflicts us today is plain enough and so are its causes, despite the "cultured" voices in comment on its incidence so often, with such effortless (and unwarranted) and arrogant superiority in the Press and over the air.

The voices are of those who are tired and sick and self-centered, because in no way God-centered. They have nothing to offer except their own, exceedingly tawdry selves of which we are all so very tired. I think it is time we realised this and that they were told that we did so, quietly and firmly and very surely; told that they were totally expendable; that they have nothing to offer.

In the second part of his article on intercommunion, Michael Davies considers, once again, the case of Barbara Olson. At the end of the day, his conclusion is that, from the very nature of the Holy Eucharist, Holy Communion can be received only by members of the Catholic Church. Recent church documents have caused confusion here, which should never have been.

Sacrament of Unity : 2

MICHAEL DAVIES

THE documents necessary to an understanding of the background to the abuse of "Eucharistic hospitality" are:

1. Decree on Ecumenism of Vatican II.
2. The Ecumenical Directory, 1967, promulgated by the Secretariat for the Promotion of the Unity of Christians.
3. The Instruction Concerning Cases when other Christians may be admitted to Eucharistic Communion in the Catholic Church, 1972, promulgated by the Secretariat for the Promotion of the Unity of Christians.
4. A note about certain interpretations of the 1972 Instruction, 1973, promulgated by the Secretariat for the Promotion of the Unity of Christians.

All these documents are included in Austin Flannery's *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, Costello Publ. Co., P.O. Box 9, Newport, N.Y. 11768.

The Case of Barbara Olson

Before examining these documents I will refer again to the case of Barbara Olson being allowed to receive Holy Communion on the occasion of her marriage to an Italian journalist. News of this startling break with tradition caused great scandal among British Catholics, and resulted in a lengthy correspondence in *The Tablet*, at that time

probably the most respected Catholic publication in the English-speaking world. Now it has been reduced to little more than a mouthpiece for neo-modernism, and contents itself with reproducing page after page of computerized Liberal clichés for the handful of readers who still bother to take it. The principal correspondent in the correspondence concerning Miss Olson was Fr. E. Carey, an English theologian of repute. He maintained that: "To give Holy Communion in any circumstances to a non-Catholic is contrary to the nature of the Eucharist". Fr. Carey considered that even the Pope did not have the authority to permit such a break with tradition. When the Instruction and Note were first published in English, I wrote to him asking if these documents had changed his opinion. He stated that they most certainly had not and that the Instruction and Note contained internal contradictions. Fr. Carey noted that the Decree on Ecumenism, No. 8, had been used in the late documents as the authority for permitting Eucharistic hospitality. He rightly pointed out, in an article which he wrote at my request for the June 1976 issue of *Christian Order*, that: "The whole of Number 8 was concerned with common prayer and common worship and never contemplated intercommunion". No objective reader can study No. 8 of the Decree and come to any conclusion other than that reached by Fr. Carey. The relevant section reads:

In certain circumstances, such as in prayer services "for unity" and during ecumenical gatherings, it is allowable, indeed desirable, that Catholics should join in prayer with their separated brethren. Such prayers in common are certainly a very effective means of petitioning for the grace of unity, and they are a genuine expression of the ties which bind Catholics to their separated brethren. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them". (Mt. 18:20).

There is not the least doubt that the grace referred to here is the grace to be obtained from common worship. There is not a phrase or even a word which could justify inviting a Protestant to receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist in a Catholic church. However, the Directory,

in 1967, has the effrontery to distort No. 8 of the Decree to the extent of claiming that *it refers to sacramental grace*. No. 53 of the Directory states:

Since the sacraments are both signs of unity and source of grace (cf. *Decree on Ecumenism*, n. 8), the Church can, for adequate reasons, allow access to those sacraments to a separated brother. This may be permitted in danger of death or in urgent need (during persecution, in prisons) if the separated brother has no access to a minister of his own communion, and spontaneously asks a Catholic priest for the sacraments—so long as he declares a faith in these sacraments in harmony with that of the Church, and is rightly disposed. In other cases the judge of this urgent necessity must be the diocesan bishop or the episcopal conference. A Catholic in similar circumstances must not ask for these sacraments except from a minister who has been validly ordained.

A Statement and an Instruction

The case of Barbara Olson caused such scandal that the Bishops of England complained to Rome about it. Fr. Carey wrote to Cardinal Heenan, who told him that a reply had been received from the Secretariat for the Promotion of the Unity of Christians, but that he did not think that any English Bishop would be satisfied with the explanation. Fr. Carey added that: "The Cardinal said he did not think the Sacred Congregation could be induced to admit *its grave error*".

Perhaps as a result of the representations of the English Bishops, a statement from the Secretariat was published in the English edition of *L'Osservatore Romano* on October 17, 1968. This statement was intended to clarify the ambiguous nature of No. 53 of the Directory, particularly the penultimate sentence of the extract just cited. The Statement insisted that: "It is necessary above all that two conditions be verified; that his faith concerning the Eucharist be the same as that professed by the Catholic Church, and that he is unable to approach a minister of his own confession". These restrictions clearly rule out the possibility of Protestants ever being admitted to

Holy Communion in a Catholic church in the U.S.A. or England and Wales, where Protestant ministers are far more numerous than Catholic priests. This Sacrament then appeared in a much amplified form as the Instruction of 1972.

The Instruction is entitled *In Quibus Rerum Circumstantibus* ("In what circumstances"). It claims that:

The question is not a new one. The Second Vatican Council (in the Decree on Ecumenism) and the *Ecumenical Directory* dealt with it.

The pastoral guidance offered here is not intended to change the existing rules but to explain them, bringing out the doctrinal principles on which the rules rest and so making their application easier.

As I have shown already, the Decree on Ecumenism does not deal with the question of admitting Protestants to Catholic Holy Communion. It does not so much as hint at the possibility. The Instruction then presents a lengthy and admirable exposition of the Eucharist as the Sacrament of Unity, which is in perfect conformity with the papal teaching on the subject, which I have already cited. A few quotations will make this clear:

The Eucharist really contains what is the very foundation of the being and unity of the Church: the Body of Christ, offered in sacrifice and given to the faithful as the bread of eternal life . . . signifies an existing unity brought about by Christ, the unity of the visible Church of Christ which cannot be lost . . . Celebrating the mystery of Christ in the Mass, the Church celebrates her own mystery and manifests concretely her unity.

The faithful assembled at the altar offer the sacrifice through the hands of the priests acting in the name of Christ, and they represent the community of the people of God united in the profession of one faith. Thus they constitute a sign and a kind of delegation of a wider assembly. The celebration of Mass is of itself a profession of faith in which the whole Church recognizes and expresses itself.

The Instruction Contradicts Itself

As Fr. Carey pointed out in his *Christian Order* article: "Certain things in the Instruction contradict principles

enunciated in the Instruction itself". This fact is manifested most clearly in Part IV of the Instruction:

1. The strict relationship between the mystery of the Church and the mystery of the Eucharist can never be altered, whatever pastoral measures we may be led to take in given cases. *Of its very nature, celebration of the Eucharist signifies the fullness of profession of faith and the fullness of ecclesial communion. This principle must not be obscured* and must remain our guide in this

2. *The principle will not be obscured* if admission to Catholic eucharistic communion is confined to particular cases of those Christians who have a faith in the sacrament in conformity with that of the Church, who experience a serious spiritual need for the eucharistic sustenance, who for a prolonged period are unable to have recourse to a minister of their own community, and who ask for the sacrament of their own accord; all this provided they have a proper disposition and lead lives worthy of a Christian.

Fr. Carey rightly denounces as a gratuitous assertion the claim made in (2) that the principle enunciated in (1) will not be obscured if Holy Communion is given to non-Catholics in the particular case mentioned. If, of its very nature, the Eucharist signifies the fullness of the profession of faith and ecclesial communion, then it can never be given to anyone outside that communion without contradicting its nature. The Instruction makes no attempt to show how giving Holy Communion to non-Catholics does not contradict the nature of the Sacrament; it simply states that it does not.

Summing up so far

But the story by no means ends here. Indeed, it is a chronicle of events which can only make those who love the Church weep with sorrow, shame, and embarrassment. We have seen so far:

(1) *The Ecumenical Directory* explaining how the principles in the conciliar *Decree on Ecumenism*, relating to the admission of non-Catholics to Holy Communion, can be applied in practice, when the Decree does not so much as hint that such an abuse could ever be permitted.

(2) The explanation of these non-existent principles given in the Directory leads to widespread confusion and abuse. (Before the Council, when did directives from the Vatican initiate confusion and abuse?)

(3) To overcome the confusion and abuses engendered by the Directory, a lengthy Instruction is issued in 1972, which not only contains internal contradictions but also passages which lead to further confusion and abuse.

(4) Therefore, in 1973 the Secretariat for Unity had to issue a Note *clarifying the clarification*.

The Note of 17 October, 1973

The Note states that various interpretations of the 1972 Instruction have appeared, "some of which depart from the letter and the spirit of the document. To prevent the spread of such inaccurate interpretations and their consequences, we think it is useful to recall to mind a few points".

This Note is tainted with the same internal contradictions in the doctrinal sphere which marred the Instruction, i.e., the link between the unity of the Mystical Body and the Eucharist is expressed admirably, and then contradicted by a gratuitous assertion that exceptions can be made without violating the nature of the Sacrament. Paragraph (5) of the Note is particularly objectionable:

(5) All the same, both the Ecumenical Directory and the Instruction, on the strength of what has already been said in the Vatican Council's Decree on Ecumenism, allow the possibility of exceptions insofar as the Eucharist is necessary spiritual nourishment for the Christian's life.

There can be no Exceptions

At the risk of appearing tedious, I must point out once more that there is not a word in the Decree on Ecumenism allowing the possibility of exceptions to the rule that only Catholics can be admitted to the Catholic Eucharist. Archbishop Lefebvre felt able to sign the Conciliar Decree; he most certainly would not have signed one stating that it was permissible to give Holy Communion to Protestants. A word must also be said regarding the

reference to the Eucharist "as necessary spiritual nourishment for the Christian's life". This statement, and similar statements in the Instruction, have enabled interpretations to be made which distinguish between the Eucharist as the Sacrament of Unity and the Eucharist as spiritual nourishment. But no such distinction can be made, since the spiritual end of the Sacrament is the unity of the Mystical Body. A non-Catholic who receives Catholic Communion but insists upon remaining outside the Church is thus rejecting the spiritual nourishment of the Sacrament, and making a mockery (though not deliberately) of its essential nature. I have already cited Pope Pius XII's address to the 1941 Eucharistic Congress in St. Paul, Minn., in which he quoted St. John Chrysostom's observation that those who receive Holy Communion *become what they receive*, i.e., they receive His Sacramental Body and become His Mystical Body. Any member of a Protestant sect who receives Catholic Communion and remains in his sect is most certainly not becoming what he receives. Furthermore, as Fr. Carey pointed out in his *Christian Order* article, if being unable to receive the Eucharist for a prolonged period constitutes sufficient grounds for a Protestant to receive the Catholic Sacrament, then they should always be allowed to do so, as they do not have a valid Eucharist in their sects, having no valid priests to consecrate the Sacrament. He writes:

The Explanatory Note, says that both *The Ecumenical Directory* and the Instruction allow the possibility of exceptions insofar as the Eucharist is the necessary spiritual nourishment of the Christian life. If that is so, and if that is sufficient to break a principle flowing from the very nature of the Sacrament, then how can one deny Holy Communion to all those who have never had It, because they have not a valid priesthood in their church? According to that logic, we should persuade non-Catholics to receive our Holy Communion, not wait for them to ask.

Membership of the Catholic Church a Foundation for Communion

What I have written here should not be interpreted as meaning that sincere Protestants obtain no grace from tak-

ing part in the Communion Services of their own denominations. Any sincere action done with the intention of honouring God results in grace. Thus, when Anglicans gather together to worship God and receive Holy Communion with the intention of uniting themselves to Him more closely, they obviously receive a grace in return, but *it is not sacramental grace*, as their ministers lack the priestly power to effect a valid consecration.

It should also be stated that the Catholic Church does not exclude anyone from receiving the Eucharist. She simply demands membership in the Church as a necessary precondition. If a Protestant cannot in conscience be received into the Catholic Church, then he has no grounds for complaining that he cannot receive Catholic Holy Communion. I believe that I am correct in stating that only Moslems are admitted to the Holy City of Mecca. I would certainly not charge them with injustice for denying me access to this city since I am a Catholic. I have already cited the admirable clarity with which the Orthodox Church has upheld the principle of the Eucharist as the Sacrament of Unity.

Thus, from a doctrinal standpoint, the Note is as defective as its predecessors, the Instruction and the Directory. However, it does have the merit of making the restrictions placed upon the admission of Protestants to Catholic Holy Communion far more clear, particularly the discretionary powers given to local bishops. Both the Instruction and the Note deal with these discretionary powers, but I have not commented upon them yet, as I shall do so in dealing with the current Syracuse aberration. The Bishop of Syracuse, N.Y., is admitting Protestants to Holy Communion in a manner that violates the existing legislation in the most flagrant manner possible. I shall examine his defiance of this legislation within the context of that legislation. The criticism I make of him for going beyond the rules laid down by the Secretariat for the Unity of Christians in no way implies that I accept that a Protestant can ever be given Holy Communion in a Catholic church. I concur entirely with Fr. Carey that: "To give Holy Communion in any circumstances to a non-Catholic is contrary to the nature of the Eucharist".

Below we print an excerpt from the address of Mr. Alfred Marnau, Chairman of the Latin Mass Society, at the Society's Annual General Meeting on June 27th of last year, 1981. The Society's address is 3, Cork St., London W1X 1HA, United Kingdom.

Battered Not Broken

ALFRED MARNAU

WHEN each of us joined this Society we knew that it was likely to prove a decision that would deeply affect us; that it would involve us, in an unprecedented way, in the life of the Church. Later we realised that that decision would isolate us and single us out; that it would be challenged—challenged even by our own soul-searching. And yet, join we did, and have since stood firm in this embattled Society.

We are seen as an easy target; as outsiders who can be ignored or ridiculed. We are regarded as a dying species soon to be extinct. We hanker after a Church which no longer exists, we are told. Those who harbour such opinions, do so at their peril. It is said that people who are falsely reported as dead, live long. And this Society will live as long as it takes to get the Old Mass back.

Of course, there are dark moments when we ask ourselves whether we are on the right track. Whether there can, against overwhelming odds, be any hope of winning through; whether it is not really all over with the Church and with the Mass. Are not Tom, Dick and Harry—and many more besides—satisfied to the point of euphoria with the Conciliar Church? What then is the matter with us? What makes us so special? Until not so long ago it was people like us who were the Church.

What makes us special is, above all, that we are *not* dissenters. Dissenters wish to change things for better or for worse. We do not wish to change anything—we want what was great and beautiful and holy to stay as it was, unchanged. Unless, of course, someone could give good

reason why the beautiful, the great and the holy should be changed. It was not we who called in a repair squad, There was nothing needing repair. They entered unmasked; repaired nothing; ruined what was perfect leaving a mess behind. But, they did remember to send us the bill, this demolition squad disguised as repair men, for never feeling at home in the house of our Church again.

What makes us so special is a sneaking but persistent feeling, a certainty that where we stand, the Church is unchanged. Where we kneel at Mass the Church has not changed. What we received and what we intend to pass on; what we carry in our hearts and souls what we shall defend by word and deed is the Church unchanged.

How well-equipped we are is perhaps not always realised. We have an armoury of weapons. Do we not say "armed with a missal"? Yes, our worn and battered missals are suitable weapons for a battered, but by no means worn-out Society. It is an invigorating sight when we present our arms. When those shabby missals, full of holy pictures and memorial cards come out of pockets, briefcases and shopping bags to be ready when the priest enters. Busy fingers mark the pages with tinted ribbons: ribbons still fresh in colour after years of use—except for the ends which have been exposed, not unlike ourselves, to wind and rain; to air and sun. Those ends are a little faded like something fine and rare. They tell their own tale and we understand well what they tell us: "Keep the Mass, keep the Mass, pray on"!

In these sad days, when we set the pages for the Mass of the day, how often do we not feel a pang. For it is no longer as it was. Then it was easy; we moved from one day's Mass to the next; but now there is, only too often, an awful gap since the last time we arranged those ribbons. They may still be at Candlemas when the day is the feast of a saint in April or May. But as we prepare ourselves and set the pages so that not one single word is lost during a Mass, we may smile as we recall that we are supposed to be the ones who do not know and, therefore, have to be instructed on how to participate !

And there are those — and they are many — who arm themselves with their old missal even when attending a new Mass. And there is truly then a well-tried friend and true.

There they kneel trying to find a way of understanding new things by matching them with what was once unchangeable; trying to recover what was lost by searching for traces of it in this new order which, they cannot help noticing, is already crumbling into disorder. A dissipated youth of barely twelve.

Yes, we are embattled and, yes, we are fighting back. We have our weapons and some of them are in very young hands.

More priests are coming forward these days; some young, some highly placed, ready to say Mass for us. Not only on weekdays; but also on feast days and Sundays. And, if more and more priests are ready to stand at the foot of the altar and acknowledge in murmured Latin that he will "go unto the altar of God" and plead that his cause be distinguished from "those not holy", how can we fail? The Church we love rises unchanged every time a priest at Mass faces God. Every time a priest ascends the steps of the altar to face God it means — one step nearer to that true altar which is, and will be until the end of time, guarded by God's angels. What is happening now cannot last. We cannot fail in our quest because no human institution, let alone a divine one, can survive if it cuts itself off from its ancient lifegiving source.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

A beautifully produced edition of Pope John Paul's encyclical "On Human Work" published by the Apostolate of Catholic Truth. Obtainable from:

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The self-willed secularism which marks the lives of many in the Church today, particularly amongst priests and religious, leads them inevitably and logically to autonomy as their chosen goal. Out of this comes the contemporary urge to construct a Church set at the service of autonomous man; a secularized Church in aid of secularized man. This, because, contorted thought it may seem, the ideal of the secularist, autonomous Christian is the making of a new man, not because of God, but in spite of God. The Marxist shares this ideal. This accounts for the presence of Christian/Marxists on the contemporary scene. Secularism is the lynch-pin that binds them together.

CURRENT COMMENT

Secularism and the Supernatural : I

THE EDITOR

READERS will forgive me if I take as my cue for this and a subsequent article a quotation, made use of in last month's "Current Comment", from Peter Nichols' book, *The Pope's Divisions*. Here it is once again :

"So many certainties need looking at once again if this complete embodiment of the institutional nature of religion is to reach the second millenium as protagonist of the self-completion of mankind, and not a confusing element in the choice of right and wrong."

The Primary Purpose of the Church

What I would like to stress, once again, at the outset of what I have to say this month is what I stressed in my article a month ago : the primary purpose of the Church is

not the self-completion or self-fulfilment of mankind. It cannot be. Made by God out of nothing, in consequence belonging to Him completely, man's obligation can only be to serve God through the fulfilment, not primarily and directly of himself, but of God's law in his regard. To the extent that he does this, making use of his essentially human powers of understanding and will to hold to God's law, true completion (fulfilment) will come to a man not directly, but in the only way possible for a human being on this earth; as a by-product of his adherence to God's truth contained in His law. "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free", said Our Lord. Man is *free* to choose, but he is *under obligation* to choose the truth. He will respect this obligation to the extent that God is before his eyes as the focal point of his life. He will not respect it if God is no longer in that category; in consequence, of no real significance in his life. Under these circumstances, with God gone from him, God's law ceases to be of account where he is concerned, its following no longer felt as obligatory; instead, his own self-completion sought directly on his own terms, supplants the observance of God's law as the primary purpose of man's existence. The point is simply made; the loss of God leads inevitably to the sovereignty of man. Self-completion, therefore, sought direct by sovereign, self-contained man, necessarily without reference to God and on sovereign man's own terms, replaces the observance of God's law as the primary purpose of man's life. This is what I mean by secularism; the pursuit of the self, as distinct from the supernatural (however dimly sensed), on one's own terms and without reference to God's law, as the primary purpose of one's life.

It would be foolish to think that this secularist stance, adopted to a greater or lesser extent by so many—including bishops, priests and religious—within the Church today is always the result of a deliberate act of defiance of God. In no way. Tension between the supernatural and the secular is endemic in the life of the Christian. Hence the temptation, never far from him, to relax the tension in favour of the secular or merely natural; a life-style removed from the influence of Grace. The temptation, in my own view, is rarely yielded to abruptly.

It is a matter so often of little more than subconscious acquiescence over the years. The temptation gains the victory and the secular predominates once the Christian comes to the point where he sees himself as in charge of his own life, not under God, but with himself, not God, as its reference point. His life is now what it never should be; his own, to do with it not what God wills, but what he himself wants.

Freedom and Autonomy

Thereby, a tension parallel to that between the supernatural and the natural and which besets the life of every human being by reason of his very nature is resolved unfavourably. The tension is between freedom and autonomy. Man is free to choose; but under obligation, by reason of that total dependence on God that comes from his creation from nothing, to regard his freedom of choice not as an end in itself—an ultimate; but as a means to the attainment of that freedom or harmony of being, which can only come to a life that is set within the guidelines of God. Thus the drift into the secular which marks the lives of a sizeable minority of priests and religious — together with their lay associates—within the Church today is not merely a drift away from God and the supernatural but, at the same time and necessarily, in favour of themselves as the arbiters not only of their own lives, but that of the Church of which they are members. The widespread interpretation within the Church of freedom of conscience as the sovereignty of private judgment stands out in clear and somewhat startling evidence of the drift towards autonomy which marks the lives of too many Catholics today.

Not God's Thing but Their Own

Having drifted from God those whom we might call autonomous Christians are left only with themselves. Their object in life, therefore, is now, of necessity and however hazily sought, not to do "God's thing"; but their own and to persuade Christians generally to do the same; thereby to arrive at what they describe perversely enough as "maturity". Release from the restraints of what they think of as past "rigidities" within the Church and still imposed

by its present authority is seen by the autonomous Christian as essential if he and those who think with him are to engage in what is thought of now by too many as the primary Christian task—the direct pursuit of self-fulfilment *on man's own terms* as distinct from the fulfilment *on God's terms* of God's Law as made known by His Church. In other words, confrontation with a view to release from the restraints—ecclesiastical, moral and social—which stand in the way of self-fulfilment on man's own terms, not God's. Those who attempt the break-through are seen as attaining the initial stages of fulfilment even as they do so, for one “becomes” in the doing: and one knows in the doing. For the autonomous Catholic secularist (the contradiction must be forgiven) as for the Marxist, action is the key to knowledge as well as selfhood. This must be so, for what is the Marxist, if he is not an autonomous secularist? For him and for the like-minded Christian, *orthopraxis* supplants *orthodoxy* as the way to knowledge as well as selfhood. For both, the assault on restraint is cumulative without their knowing it. It must be because, of its nature, it represents an attempt to attain the infinite with finite tools; to satisfy the longing for boundless perfection, which is in us all, with that which is set within bounds. Those, then, who would seek perfection, within themselves or for society as a whole, from a secularist base and with secularist tools, are doomed thereby and sadly to dissatisfaction. There is always a further river to cross. Change is their ally. Their verbs are conjugated constantly in the future. They have to be. It follows that the process of break-through must be ongoing, precisely because it is cumulative for the reasons already described.

The “New” non-credal Christianity

It is important that we should remind ourselves that God as transcendent has gone from the thinking of the clerico-religious *avant-garde* within the Church today. Where they are concerned He is dead. Their's is, in consequence, a godless or, at least, a graceless world. They may pay distant court to Him, but that it all. Their lives are set within the secular. Where they are concerned, what remains of God is revealed in man's work of secularist fulfilment

within himself and on his world. Gregory Baum (the ex-priest) speaks for many of them in this respect. Professor James Hitchcock gives the relevant quote in his book, *The Catholic Church and Modernity*:

"God is not the symbol of power over man but rather a symbol of power in and through man, that is, the symbol of the release of man's power and its orientation towards growth and liberation."

As Hitchcock points out dryly and with perception, "The utility of this formula lies in the fact that one can thereby be a Christian without affirming the existence of any being truly distinct from the self. . . ." Seeking oneself one seeks God, because God is man's developed self—a convenient hypothesis, to say the least. Thus, autonomous man remains complete; in charge of himself and his world. Inevitably, these two are divinized as God is demythologized. Man, not God, stands at the centre of the universe, with his Maker no more than an expression of his fulfilled selfhood. The task of the "new" post-conciliar Church is to keep man there. Social by nature, in need of the group, man becomes fully himself only in a society of liberated and like-minded men, which it is the work of a liberated Church to foster. *Its work today is the release of men from supernatural and, indeed, all restraint.* No less, appallingly, than that. Action in aid of this release is necessarily on-going and obligatory for the Christian. Refusal of participation places him necessarily outside the fold.

Two exponents of the new religion within the Church are worth quoting here; one at theological level, the other at that of the parish. They are in no way unrepresentative. The first, unfortunately, is a Jesuit historian. Hitchcock cites him in his book as providing the charter for the new outlook:

"Vatican II determined that religion should be changed by men, in order to meet the needs of men.

"Catholicism as we know it is not simply adjusting to the present. It is being transformed into something different, even while it clings to the soft word *aggiornamento*.

"What this means is that we are freed from the past. We are free to appropriate what we find helpful and reject what we find harmful.

"The only meaningful questions we can ask the past are ones which are somehow relevant to our own needs and interests."

Thus speaketh autonomous man. Reduced to the level of the grass roots, the perverse pontificating of the Jesuit historian and too many others like him comes out like this through the mouth of a parish priest, caught up in the secularism of the day and with his roots gone from God. The story is by Joseph F. Coleman and appeared in *The Wanderer*, the American Catholic Weekly, for September 27th, 1979. From it I quote as follows:

"Her husband of eight years had left. Not in the night or with hostility but, rather, as the obvious conclusion to a well-known story. Neither were shocked. No children and with no substantial values binding them their marriage was of economic and sexual convenience. Both had become financially independent and sexually bored. So being modern, they had a 'civilized divorce'. But that old obstructive fly was in the ointment. 'It was about eight-nine months after the divorce. I started to feel guilty inside. I felt I let God down. I thought that old Catholic school stuff was left behind. But what the nuns taught kept coming back—about marriage as a sacrament and divorce being wrong and sex being holy. But I keep telling myself that had all changed. Priests and nuns didn't teach that old stuff any more. I kept telling myself this but the old lessons and my guilt wouldn't die. I was confused. I was scared. So I decided to go to our parish priest'.

"She explained that her parish involvement was Mass on Sunday although not every week. 'When I told the priest my troubles he smiled and said that I've been through a great emotional strain. That my psychological make-up was causing these guilt feelings. He assured me that my actions were right and proper for a mature Christian. He said there were no rules. He said that Jesus came to break all the rules that hold people down. The only guide we should follow, he said, was—to thine own self be true. Do what you feel is right. Rules, laws and authorities must be discarded if they interfere with your own growth process to maturity. Jesus wants us to be free to be ourselves, not to be

someone else's model. I asked him if this was his own personal view or the Church's. He said that since Vatican II the Church had shed many archaic, psychologically harmful opinions. He assured me that the spirit of Vatican II is the spirit of liberation where Christian maturity manifests itself through our personal choices. I told him this was so different from what I learned in school and that it seemed empty. There was nothing to grab on.

"I told him that even though I was never a thoughtful Catholic, nonetheless the Church always seemed so firm and confident in its teachings."

Here you have the new, non-credal, secularist Christianity at its worst. The end of that poor woman's story is not surprising. She found her peace at last within a fundamentalist Protestant church. There was nothing left for her in what she was given to think of as the new, secularized Catholic Church. How many thousands of others, Catholics like her, have been given good reason for thinking the same?

God is Liberated Man

I would like to take a little further now the analysis of the secularized and, therefore, autonomous Catholic, which I began earlier on in this article. As already noted, for him the emanation of God as the image of man is revealed in autonomous man's liberating work of fulfilment within himself and on his world. God is liberated man. He comes fully "alive" only in a society (ecclesiastical or civil) of liberated men, which it is the task of the newly secularized, post-conciliar Church to foster by every means in its power. The motivation of the "new" post-conciliar Church, along with its contemporary task are both to be found there. Hence the call for social justice from within that Church is so often wrongly orientated because seen by too many secularized Christians not as a virtue to be exercised for Christ's sake in aid of the poor and oppressed; but as a cover for any and every action, irrespective of its morality, in aid of that release from restraint which goes by the name of liberation; at the same time, a cohesive to hold together an increasingly secularized Church, bereft of Grace, in danger of falling apart because stripped of

supernatural purpose. This said, it is important to realise that there is, of course, a boomerang effect between the liberation of the self, as the autonomous Christian sees it, and the liberation of society. Man cannot free himself fully from the restraints that impede self-fulfilment except that he free society from the social, political and economic structures that are, in the eyes of the autonomous secularist, responsible for so many of these restraints. No more can he free society, except that he set about freeing himself from the inhibitions, particularly of a moral sort, that hold him back from the uninhibited activity that the "ideal" of secularized, self-fulfilment demands. In order to liberate others, he must himself be liberated. At this point, therefore, what the Marxist would call an ideological leap is called for in the shape of what the autonomous Christian bent on secularist, self-fulfilment would call a "faith-commitment". In other words, the eradication from the would-be liberator's mind of everything that acts as a moral or doctrinal drag on the willed autonomy of what Hitchcock calls his would-be "imperial self", and the dedication of that self to the liberation of the society of which it forms a part. The autonomous Christian liberator's commitment is now to the eradication of everything in contemporary society that is in restraint of secularized fulfilment in the sense already described. For him, restraint is the enemy, self-fulfilment the goal. In its pursuit all means are justified, for it is in itself the new and true religion; thereby holy, containing within itself its own morality, which canonizes automatically all means to its attainment irrespective of what they are. Commitment to it is all. The rest follows. The new "christianity" is expressed at its finest in its pursuit. The goal is a new heaven on a new earth where each is free to express himself freely without restraint. A new world of new men who have succeeded in becoming what our First Parents attempted to be and failed to become—"like Gods". There will be no failure this time; for reasons unstated by the autonomous Christian. So it goes. . . .

Need for a Positive Response

It would be a very great mistake to write off the present call for social justice from within the Church as no more

than a call for the liberation of man and society in aid of secular self-fulfilment. In my view, this is what too many Catholics of traditionalist bent are inclined to do. They make their blanket condemnation of social justice and what is called liberation theology and leave it at that. Thereby, they render a disservice to the Church because there is great need today for the practice of social justice in the true and in no way specious sense of that much maligned phrase; but understood rightly as a virtue to be employed in aid of man's true and genuine liberation from the social, political and economic forces that oppress him; in this sense that they constrict—often to an intolerable degree—the rightful employment of his human powers in the work of his own salvation and that of his fellowmen. Men are meant by God to co-operate, as the human beings that they are, in this work of overriding importance that lies before each one of them all through their lives on this earth.

Two Things to Remember

There are two things we should remind ourselves of in this context. In the first place, precisely because men are human beings, their human powers of understanding and will are to be exercised in co-operation with their Creator in the work of salvation. Their work as *human* beings demands the exercise of their *human* powers. Secondly, men are not disembodied spirits. They are made up of body and soul, so intertwined that they act and react on each other. From which it follows that the human person, which each one is, not merely needs, but has a God-given right to the minimum of social, political and economic conditions that will enable him to co-operate, through the right use of his human powers, in the work of salvation, which is all-embracing. Man's dignity as a human being demands that he co-operate with God in this fashion and commands the Church to respect it, for her purpose is to assist men in the work of salvation and her evangelizing effort exists in aid of it. She is commanded primarily by Christ Our Lord to bring men the Good News of the Gospel and to teach them the way of salvation. In consequence, as an aid to this primary task, she must strive to free or liberate men from the kind of oppressive political, social and economic con-

ditions that prevent their human co-operation in the work of salvation laid on them by their Creator, who gave them their human nature. The Church's action in the social, political and economic fields is, indeed, essentially ancillary, but none the less vital because in necessary support of man, the human person, in pursuit of salvation for himself and his fellows.

What we can call the social good of man is not an end in itself to be sought for its own sake; it has not got for its goal an earthly paradise and nothing more. It is essentially a means; to be pursued nevertheless with the utmost vigour precisely because of the grandeur of the objective of which it is in support. This is no more and no less than the salvation of men; the completion of Christ's redemptive work, which demands our human co-operation through the rightful exercise of our human powers. This the Catholic Social Movement has always recognised from its first beginnings. It is only lately that the drift into secularism, which surfaced not because of the Council, but in its wake, has confused this vital issue, bidding men seek their all here on this earth in the name of their own secularised self-fulfilment sought on their own terms, not God's, and as an end in itself. The answer to this confused and tragic trivialization is not to repudiate liberation as such or social justice as such, but to strive for both for Christ's sake, in His name and on His terms; which means their employment for the purpose for which they were intended. This and no other.

(To be Concluded)

PLEASE NOTE

It would be the greatest help if the very few who have not yet replied to my letter reminding them that their subscriptions are due, would do so without delay. I would be so grateful if they would do this.

—Paul Crane, S.J.

The recent publication in English and French of a giant compilation of the theological writings of the Fathers of the Eastern Church may have incalculable ecumenical consequences for Eastern and Western Christendom.

East - West Ecumenical Break - Through

CZESLAW JESMAN

RECENTLY, there have been translations into English and, quite recently, French of the *Philocalia* of the *Neptic Fathers*, a giant compilation of theological texts produced by St. Nicodemus Hagiorite and St. Macarius of Corinth. It may not be too much to say that this represents one of the most significant contributory factors to the all-important work of bridging the gap between the East of Christendom and the West. At this time of confusion within the Church, there is a tendency to relegate purely philosophical and theological works to a secondary place within the structure and impact of the Catholic Faith. This is to be deplored rather than wondered at. Within the framework of the universalist consumer-society of the West and the failed consumer-society of Marxist atheism, religion, as a dominant concept, is, at the worst, persecuted and, whenever possible, stamped out. At the best, it is either diluted with mundane considerations of economic equality or overlaid with a veneer of agnostic good intentions, which are held up as suitable and, indeed, primary objectives of Christian striving in today's world. Both West and East—each in its own way—are at one in seeking to produce a purely natural man, content with this earth and nothing more, only too willing that his life should be without any supernatural goal, deprived wholly of metaphysical meaning.

Lack of Understanding

The Christian position is weakened further under these circumstances by the political cleavage between East and

West and the waning over the years of any real and mutual understanding of the different religious concepts and traditions that have evolved separately in the West, based on Rome, and the East, centered on Constantinople. In this twentieth century, the movement towards understanding, with a view towards eventual unity, has grown apace, especially during these past few years. Nevertheless, this wholly desirable movement cannot be sustained unless those concerned with it are aware of each other's theology, philosophy, modes of expression within these disciplines and a whole host of derivative subjects springing from them.

As a matter of fact, the *Philocalia of the Neptic Fathers* was published in the original Greek in Venice in 1782. This was to be expected. The Venetian Republic had been for several centuries a projection of the Byzantine Empire into the heart of Western Europe. While the Eastern Christian heartland remained in the grip of the Ottoman Empire, as hostile to any form of Christianity as any Marxist State, Greek Christian traditions were upheld in Venice and Greek Christian letters continued. During the days of trial in the Middle Ages, Venice was, indeed, an often treacherous foster-child of Constantinople; but, after political and military dramas had been played out; after Constantinople had been taken by the Turks, with the last Christian Emperor dying in its defence, Venice became the last refuge of the Byzantine spiritual and cultural Christian heritage. At the end of the eighteenth century, it was the only place in the world where the *Philocalia* could be published. But it remained, even so, sealed in its formal and hieratic Greek. A closed book to all except the Greek clergy.

True, parts of the *Philocalia* were published from time to time in Latin, but, taken out of context, they were quickly forgotten, without leaving any kind of significant impression on their few readers. They did not contribute to mutual understanding between the Christendoms of West and East. The less so, in view of the fact that, in mundane matters, the Orthodox Church and its interests tended to become identified with those of the growing Russian Empire of the Czars, as opposed to the truly spiritual interests and outlook of the Greek Orthodox outposts which were to be found in the Middle East, in Palestine and Egypt.

The Russian (Orthodox) Church evolved its own restatement of religious dogma. Often, this did not blend with the spirit of the Greek Fathers. As time passed, the Kingdom of Greece was established to comprise some parts of the Greek mainland in the thirties of the last (nineteenth) century. The ecumenical Patriarch, however, resided outside the boundaries of the newly established kingdom, in the Phanar district of Constantinople, renamed by the victorious Turks Istanbul, with a view to erasing the Christian memories of its imperial past. Modern Greece never forgot nor has forgotten this past, known to succeeding generations of Greeks all over the world as "The Grand Design". Under the circumstances that prevailed, however, that past could not be nourished. It remained as no more than a pang of nostalgia; in no way the expression of a universalist dream. Things were such that the Greek Orthodox Hierarchy and Monasteries could stake no claim to initiate any kind of discussion with the Christian West.

Moscow: "The Third Rome"

Meanwhile, the Russian Orthodox Church had undergone a change, which set it apart from Western Christendom even further than was the case with the ecumenical Patriarchs when their animosity towards Rome was at its height. Long before, the Grand Dukes of Muscovy had declared themselves the champions of true Orthodox Christendom. Moscow became the "Third Rome". Then, Grand Duke Ivan III assumed the title of "Master or Czar of All the Russias". In 1472, he married Sophia Paleologue, one of the last descendants of Constantine XIII, the last Emperor of Byzantium who was cut down when the Turks stormed his capital of Constantinople in 1453. The Grand Duke Ivan III, now Czar, took the bicephalous eagle of Byzantium as the coat of arms of his State and, with it, most of the fallen Empire's usages and ways of thought. Amongst these, a detestation of the "Latins", exacerbated in Russia to a point never reached in Byzantium itself. During the public audiences of successive Czars in Russia, a courtier stood near the throne with a silver dish and a clean towel for the instant use of the Czar if, by any chance, he should touch a "Latin".

Russia's Orthodox Church and the Crown

With the accession of Peter the Great to the throne of Russia in 1689, the Patriarchate of Moscow, hitherto enjoying a sort of co-sovereignty with the Czar, was suspended. The Russian Orthodox Church was turned into one of the agencies of the Crown. This turn of events hardly promoted theological thought or studies. Sects multiplied within the Russian Orthodox Church and their members fell away from the mainstream of traditional dogma and liturgy. They were treated as criminals by the Czarist police and either deported to Siberia or banished from the country. Considerable communities of, for example, "*Molokanie*", who were vegetarians, "*Skotsy*", who castrated themselves after producing a son, and other peculiar Russian "*sektonty*" saw the light of day in the second half of the nineteenth century and settled, after being exiled, in many countries, from Canada to Rumania and China. They did not regard themselves as Orthodox, *Pravoslavnyie*, or members of Russia's State Church.

During all this time, the Orthodox Church Establishment in Russia became more of a branch of the civil service than a seat of theological learning and instruction. In Palestine, for example, and as far away as Ethiopia, the Russian Orthodox State Church acted mainly as an agent of reconnaissance in strength for Russian political and territorial expansion. In these areas, the Greek Orthodox Church was just as much an adversary of its activities as were the "Latin" Catholic missionaries from Rome. Even on Mount Athos, a mountain on the Greek coast inhabited exclusively by monastic communities, independent of each other, the Russian Orthodox Monasteries tried to assert themselves over the Greeks and dominate them.

The Red Czars

Awareness of these historical antecedents, however briefly sketched in this article, is absolutely essential for anyone endeavouring to assess the comparative ease with which the Russian Orthodox Church, despite the vicious persecutions to which successive Soviet Governments had subjected it, accepted the overriding domination of the Soviet Government under its new Red Czars. And this applies not merely to the Orthodox Church in Russia today, but to

many Russian Orthodox Dignitaries in exile, who recognise the Patriarch of Moscow, nominated by the Soviet Government, as a true Patriarch and the Soviet Orthodox Church as a true Church. There is, of course, an underground Orthodox Church in the Soviet Union at present, but its numbers are small—no more than 10 to 15 million—and its members concerned mainly with survival. It avoids all-contact with the state-sponsored Church. Its apostolic work is considerable; but external pressures are such as to prevent any deepening and developing of theological thought and learning.

Significance of the "Philocalia"

For these, admittedly very sad reasons the publication in English and French translation of the *Philocalia of the Neptic Fathers* becomes now of tremendous significance. It would be idle and unrealistic to suppose that, at this moment and under these circumstances, the Orthodox Hierarchy of the Soviet Union could restate the dogmatic and exegetic premisses of Eastern Orthodoxy. The Ecumenical Conference held recently in Rhodes and attended by delegates from the Vatican and the Patriarchate of Athens failed to elucidate many points of contention between Eastern and Western Christendom, mainly through lack of information at the requisite theological level. Some years from now this difficulty will no longer exist. The volumes of the *Philocalia* contain the sum-total of Eastern Christendom's basic theological works. The eighteenth-century Venice publication consisted of 1207 folio pages. These were described in the books Preface as "Compiled from the writings of the Holy Fathers, bearers of God, in which perfection has been achieved by wisdom of life, consisting of intelligence purified and illuminated by asceticism and contemplation". Those whose works appear in the volumes of the *Philocalia* range from the Desert Fathers to the great theologians of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries—Antonios, Cassian, Gregory Palamas and Simeon, known as the New Theologian.

Thus, to the Western Church and at a most opportune time, there has now been opened the theological treasure-house of Eastern Orthodox Christian Wisdom and Learning. Ecumenical results, in the field where it matters most, could be incalculable.

Since the return to power of Teng Hsiao-p'ing, it has been a good deal easier to visit China, and the resulting influx of visitors has enabled a clearer picture of religion in China to be put together. Some visitors have been very optimistic.

In the following article, Fr. Ladany draws together a number of reports, both written and oral, concerning the present religious situation — at least, as it was in December, 1980. Acknowledgements to *Social Survey*.

The Church in China 1980

L. LADANY, S.J.

WE have now a considerable amount of information about Christian life in the cities of China. This comes from two sources. One is the Chinese press and what foreign and Chinese tourists see in the larger cities. Much of this information is documented in Chinese and foreign newspapers.

There is a second source of information. In the last two years, Chinese living abroad have been allowed to visit their families in China. These visitors include Chinese Christians, lay-people, sisters and priests. They are a very reliable source of information about the situation of Christians in the places they have visited, and since the families live in various parts of China, a mosaic of information has been gathered. The mosaic is not yet complete, and there are still many of the 134 dioceses about which we know nothing. Nevertheless, what we have learned from visitors, to which should be added freer correspondence with the outside world, is significant.

Information from the Cities and the Countryside

The two types of information are very different. The first comes from the larger cities, the second from the

countryside. The first is what eyes, even eyes of untutored foreigners, can see. The second is what Chinese visiting their families learn from intimate conversations with relatives and old friends. The first type can be documented. The sources of the second type can hardly be published without compromising and seriously endangering persons in China. The first goes round the world and is published in the world press. About the second, few know anything. Those who come out, having visited their relatives, would be the last to want to blazon abroad what they have seen and heard.

The two sources describe two very different aspects of the life of Christians in China. Let us describe the cities first, then the villages—but there are “villages” in the cities too.

IN THE CITIES

On December 21, 1979, a priest of the Peking diocese, Fu T'ieh-shan, was ordained bishop without the consent of Rome, in the only church open in Peking. On All Saints Day, 1979, Chang Chia-shu, who in the same way was made bishop in 1960, said the first public Mass for decades in an ancient chapel in Shanghai. Gradually, a single church was opened for service in 13 cities.

These churches are run by the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, which is subject to the Religious Affairs Bureau of the Government, and this Bureau rules, in accordance with the same policy, all religions, Buddhist, Moslem, Taoist and Christian. The Religious Affairs Bureau is under the Communist Party Central Committee's United Front Department. The priests who function in these churches are assigned by these organs. Not priests only. The numerous visitors to the church in Canton cannot fail to notice that a woman, a Mrs. Lin, is in charge, and gives orders to the priests.

Pre-Vatican II

The services in the church follow the pre-Vatican II rules (Masses are said in Latin, in silence, with a second gospel, etc.) In Peking, a small prayer book is on sale. This contains the old Morning and Evening Prayers, but, in the Litany of the Saints, the invocation to prayer for the Holy

Father is replaced by "Let us pray for our superiors". Attendance, however, is very small in view of the number of Christians in the cities.

The Protestants—all Protestant churches were united in 1953 under the name "Chinese Christian Three-Self Patriotic Movement"—are ruled by the same Government and Party organs. They have now reopened churches in eleven cities.

At the end of May, the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, which in the 50s cut all relations with Rome, held its 3rd national conference. (The first was held in 1957, the second in 1962.) The *People's Daily*, the organ of the Party Central Committee, published a brief communique restating the old policy of an "independent, self-ruling, self-managing" church, "opposing any interference in, or control of, our country's church by outside forces". The conference was nevertheless eager "to foster relations with foreign friends". In menacing terms, the paper also reported (May, 31, 1980) the need for "vigilance in preventing small numbers of evil persons from using the pretext of religion to invent rumours, seduce the masses, sow discord and create divisions".

A new leadership of the Patriotic Association was set up. Its head is Tsung Huai-teh, who was made bishop by the government in 1958. Of the eight deputy heads, five are similarly ordained bishops, one is a priest and two are laymen, one of whom, T'ang Lu-tao, had been deputy secretary-general since 1957, and is now secretary-general.

The Party Program

The conference was prolonged a further three days, under the new name, the Chinese Catholic Conference. Top leaders of the Communist Party took part in this renamed extension of the conference. Ulanfu, head of the Central Committee's United Front Department, spoke, reiterating that the Chinese Catholic Church is independent, self-governing and self-administering, that it works for the return of Taiwan to the Fatherland, against hegemonism (i.e., against the Soviet Union) and for world peace. (This is the Party program for all.) Two new organs were established, the Bishop's Conference, and the Chinese Catholic

religious Affairs Committee, which deal with "religious affairs in the spirit of independence, self-government, self-administration"—precisely what the Patriotic Association has been doing since 1957. Chang Chia-shu, the illegal bishop of Shanghai (Bishop Ignatius Kung, the legal bishop, imprisoned in 1955, is still in gaol), was made the head of this committee.

The double conference issued a Letter to the Catholic Clergy and Faithful of China, restating the warning about "evil men and foreign reactionary powers, which use the name of religion to create 'miracles', spread rumours, sow discord, create divisions". This document was not published in the press, but it was widely circulated. The reference to "miracles" is a reference to events in Zose, near Shanghai, where, in March 1980, some 10,000 Catholic fishermen from far-away regions gathered for three days of prayer. The Patriotic Association of Shanghai sent observers to Zose. They took photographs, but were pushed aside by the crowd and did not dare to interfere.

The decisions of the Catholic national conference were conveyed to the provincial and city Patriotic churches. Inner Mongolia and Heilungkiang province reported a meeting for the reception of these decisions, but did not mention the newly established Religious Affairs Committee. A meeting in Shanghai did mention it, but gave no further information about what the Committee is meant to do. At the Shanghai meeting, the 20th anniversary of the (illegal) episcopal ordination of Chang Chia-shu was celebrated.

Sowers of Discord

On June 14, Hsiao Hsien-fa, head of the Cabinet's Religious Affairs Bureau, published in the *People's Daily* an article on religious policy, fiercely attacking those in all religions who refused to join the government-run religious organizations. He repeated what had been said two weeks earlier at the Catholic conference about those "who sow discord, create confusion and sabotage the implementing of the (government's) religious policies".

Hopei province held its government-organized provincial Catholic conference in October. In Hopei, in North China, there are considerable numbers of Catholics in towns and

villages. Several Chinese priests originating from that province have visited their native places and have met large groups of Christians, a martyred church, firmly established in the faith.

Joint Letter

The Hopei conference of the Patriotic Church established a provincial Religious Affairs Committee. A new leadership was elected; but no names were published. The two organizations published a Joint Letter to the Clergy and Faithful of the Province, dated October 22, 1980. This was more out-spoken than the Letter of the National Conference: "Baptism may be administered and religious instruction may be given only to persons above the age of 18. In all that concerns marriage, divorce, remarriage and planned procreation, the Marriage Law and other regulations of the State must be observed". Further, "only the prayer book authorized by the Religious Affairs Committee may be used, and infiltration from outside forces must be prevented". (Prayer books printed now in China omit all mention of the Pope.)

The visits of Hopei-born priests living outside China are apparently a subject of suspicion. The Letter says: "We must sharpen our vigilance and resist the small number of evil persons and reactionary forces coming from abroad who use the name of the Church to speak of 'miracles', spread rumours, incite discord and create splits. Their machinations must be denounced so that the faithful may not be deceived".

The Protestant Churches

The Chinese Christian (Protestant) Three-self Patriotic Movement held its national conference on October 6-13, in Nanking. Like the Catholic national conference, this also set up a second organization, the Chinese Christian Association. The Anglican bishop K. H. Ting (Ting Kuanghsun) has become head of both the Three-self Patriotic Movement and the Association. Like the Catholic conference, this conference also asserted the independence of the church from any foreign influence.

The Peking English language news service calls the Association a council, "the Christian Council of China".

Its tasks are described as follows: "Supervision of the work of churches and priests, training of candidates for Christian ministry, publishing the Bible and other devotional materials, and strengthening contacts among all Churches and believers in China". The phrase "strengthening contracts among all churches" is an indirect acknowledgment of the existence of various Protestant communities in China. The various churches, Methodist, Adventists, etc., were officially blotted out of existence 30 years ago; but according to some sources, they quietly maintained their own traditions. The conference published a Resolution, widely circulated but not published in the newspapers. "We have overcome the divisions amongst us", it said. "Jesus Christ himself, the great Pastor of the masses, is leading us". The Resolution spoke in strong terms against foreign evangelists, "a small number of people outside the country" [not indicating whether Chinese or foreigners] "who despise the new China and the principles of our Three-Self Patriotism, infiltrate under the name of 'spreading the Gospel', and engage in anti-Chinese activities. . ."

Obstacles

At this year's National People's Political Consultative Conference, Bishop K. H. Ting, a member of the conference, said: "The implementation of the religious policy is meeting with many obstacles. Few churches have been reopened, and most of the Christians hold their prayer meetings in private homes. The task of our Three-Self Patriotic Movement is to unite all Christians. We cannot keep a second register for Christians who take part in home gatherings. I, as one of the leaders of the Three-Self Patriotic Church, should not like to say that such home meetings are illegal. One cannot interpret the Constitution [of the State] in the sense that there is freedom of belief in church buildings and not in families. We should not have a Three-Self Patriotic Movement merely for a small number of people. All must be united".

Bishop Ting did not say whether the majority of Christians hold their prayer meeting at home because there is not enough room in the few churches, or because, as in the past, the majority of Christians refuse to join the Three-Self Movement.

The Resolution of the Protestant National Conference seemed to echo what Bishop Ting had said. Those in the churches and those at home, the Resolution said, should show mutual understanding.

The Press

Chinese newspapers and magazines rarely talk about religious matters. In July, the *Hsinhua Daily* (July 8) published in Peking, explained why religious freedom is allowed. All forces must be used for the modernization of China, and good international relations must be fostered. Religious propaganda is allowed, but only in places of worship, whereas the Communist Party must use all available means to propagate atheism, "to induce people to abandon the superstition of religion". A Communist Party member is not allowed to join a religion. If some do, sanctions will be meted out; but this should be done with caution.

Several press articles have said that members of the communist youth organizations are not allowed to join any religion; if they have done so, they should be expelled (*Chinese Youth Daily*, September 27).

Propaganda

The *People's Daily* (July 17) quoted Marx's interpretation of Church history: Christianity in the beginning was the revolt of the poor against the rich in the Roman Empire; later, the rich took control of the Church and used it to oppress the people. In the 13th-17th centuries, religions played their part in the revolt against feudalism.

The word "religion" is a bad word. Lin Piao and the Gang of Four are constantly accused of having idolized the leader Mao, of having made a religion of the cult of the leader. Religion is also constantly presented as an enemy of science. The Peking *Kuang Ming Daily*, (August 1) published a series of articles written by scientists about the development of science. The old stories are warmed up—many other articles say the same things—the theory of Copernicus was a revolt against the Church, Giordano Bruno was condemned to die at the stake and Galileo got a life sentence.

Village Superstitions

A distinction is drawn between civilized religions (Christianity, Buddhism and Islam) and village superstitions. The first are to be tolerated, not the the second. The distinction is not always clear-cut. An article in the daily paper of the Cheking province (September 23) says: "The people's masses must be armed with the scientific world-outlook of Marxism to confront the anti-scientific world-outlook of religions and superstitions".

Since March 1980, Peking has been publishing a quarterly called *Materials for the Study of World Religions*. A number of the articles are translated from Russian. China still depends greatly on the Soviet Union for anti-religious literature. The quarterly, which is meant for intellectuals, also carries studies on Chinese Buddhism and on Christianity. Its first issue described the Vatican and gave a chronological list of the Roman Pontiffs, significantly beginning with Pius in the middle of the 2nd century. It also outlined Luther's life and reproduced extracts from Pascal. The second issue, published in July, had articles on Islam and Buddhism, and a note on the Belgian Catholic group, Pro Mundi Vita, calling it the Catholic International Intelligence Materials Centre.

Several books on Atheism have appeared, one on the history of Christianity (Christ did not exist; the history of the Catholic and Protestant Churches is one of exploitation) and one on religious policy in the Soviet Union.

Travellers

So much—or so little—has been published about religious policy and the life of the Churches. Other information comes from travellers. We learn that some priests have been released from labour camps and prisons; others have not. Some have been allowed to return to the cities, but they have not been given residence permits and therefore have no food-ration tickets. They have to rely on relatives and fervent Catholics for their daily food. They are not allowed to say mass in public, or even to anoint the sick. Those under less strict surveillance find ways to administer the Sacraments. Recently, one of them was arrested and sent off to a remote village. Two were sent back to their

old labour camps. Some have finished their sentences, but are still kept in the factories and farms of the camp. They receive a very small salary and are allowed to visit their relatives in the cities once a year. They are not allowed to engage in priestly work.

In Peking and in Shanghai, a number of priests and nuns are locked in a house. Priests or nuns who have lost their faith and have married are in charge of those who remained faithful. Shanghai Catholics call the house "Hell".

Before Communism, there were 200,000 Catholics in Peking and 150,000 in Shanghai. Their present number is not known; but it is known that many, when summoned by the officials of the Patriotic Church to go to Mass in the newly opened churches, find excuses and do not go.

Bishop Teng

The new, more liberal, religious policy is supposed to be introduced in the major cities. But the Government's order is being implemented in various ways. In a provincial capital in South China, the authorities were ready to build a church (the old cathedral had been demolished). They asked the only priest in the city to join. He refused. In Kunming, capital of Yunnan province, no church has yet been opened. In Shenyang, Manchuria, four priests were reinstalled in the cathedral and would not tell outside visitors whether they were or were not of the Patriotic Church. They look to the future with optimism. Eight legitimate bishops are still alive. One joined the Patriotic Church early, and was one of those who ordained Fu bishop in Peking last December. Another, whose standing was not clear for years, had the courage to speak of loyalty to Rome at the 1980 national conference. Bishop Dominic Teng, of Canton, was released in July, after 22 years in prison. His loyalty to Rome remained unchanged. He was allowed to meet outside visitors, but not his own Christians. In November, he got permission to go to Hong Kong for medical treatment. In Shanghai, Bishop Ignatius Kung is still in prison. The four other bishops are still under restrictions. One was released for a time, but was again put under house arrest.

Why the Differences?

What is the reason for the divergent implementation of the new religious policy? why were churches reopened in some provinces and not in others? The answer probably is that Peking's orders—not in religious matters only—are not always carried out. What is to be done is decided by the 1st Party Secretary of the province or, in the case of Shanghai, of the city. The 1st Party Secretary of Kwantung Province, the province of Canton, is one of the leading veteran Party leaders (he has recently been transferred back to Peking). He is known to be on the side of the more liberal Teng Hsiao-p'ing. The outgoing 1st Party Secretary of Shanghai (also recently transferred to Peking) has been described in the communist papers in Hong Kong as a radical and an enemy of Teng.

On the whole, apart from the few priests functioning in the newly opened churches, priests and the majority of the faithful still have only a shadowy existence. Foreign visitors and journalists have no way of meeting them.

IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

The cities are widely visible to travellers and journalists, who can photograph the churches and those present at the services. In the countryside, the situation is entirely different. The official press is silent about it and foreign visitors see little, if anything, of Christian life. Massive evidence, however, is coming from Chinese priests, sisters and Christians living abroad who, holding foreign passports, have visited their relatives in China. They have discovered a new world, a living Church of extraordinary vitality, even in places where there are no priests; much more when the local priest, after serving a long term of prison and forced labour, has been sent back to be a peasant in his own village. In such villages, many of them almost entirely Christian villages, Christian life flourishes.

The outside world is not aware of this, and individual cases, with their inevitable identification of places and persons, cannot be reported without exposing those persons to unforeseeable vexations. This applies not only to the villages, but also to priests working silently in the large

cities. They are in high demand by the Christians and render inestimable service.

Outside visitors come back from China with rich experience. The priests return from China exhilarated — and exhausted. They go, after a 30-year absence, to see their aged fathers or mothers. They write to them in advance of their coming. When they arrive, they are kept busy day and night. In the middle of the night, they are asked to say Mass, and hundreds, sometimes thousands of people gather in and around the houses where they stay. Before they start Mass, they hear confessions; after Mass, they are taken to the next village, and the whole procedure is repeated.

They return from China deeply moved. They have witnessed an incredible depth of faith, kept intact through 20-30 years of hardship. They hear moving stories about priests and lay Christians who were tortured to death, and whose houses are now venerated as sanctuaries. They meet priests, in tears, who have not had an opportunity to make their confession for 20 years. They also meet priests and Christians who have denied their faith, but return now to the fold with the utmost sorrow. There are also priests whom they knew in their young days and whom they are not able to meet, priests who are still in prison or labour camps, or simply priests who are not allowed to leave their houses or villages. Occasionally, they can send these a message and receive a few written words.

The Eucharist

They are asked to send the Eucharist to distant places where the Eucharist will be kept in the families. Prayer books and holy pictures are seized with avidity. People have none left. The visitors give small size Missals to priests who have not had one in years.

These visiting priests come back after a unique experience. They have seen a living Church, where faith is alive, where people have suffered martyrdom or years of persecution, solely because they would not abandon their faith. They have seen a Christian world such as they do not see in the countries where they live.

The same priests, travelling in China, may go to some other region or some other town where they are not known

and where they have no relatives and no old seminary colleagues. There, they are unable to meet the Christians.

Fog

A thick fog still hangs over the country, and Christians will identify themselves only to those whom they or their families know. The fog—and fear—is so thick that priests in one region do not know what has happened to the clergy in other parts of the country. Even in the large cities, members of religious orders do not know the whereabouts of their confreres, who is alive, who is dead, in other distant regions.

Our knowledge of the real life of the Chinese Christians, therefore, remains very fragmentary. We know that Christian life flourishes in many villages, and that it is not absent in the labour camps and among the ex-inmates of labour camps. Many learnt about the faith in the camps. Catholics, priests and laymen, are usually good workers, and their honesty and devotion to others shine and attract people, who then want to learn what gives them strength in hardship. Many priests in labour camps throughout the years have formed their own parishes, invisible parishes in which people help one another and live by faith.

The number of new converts is bound to be small; but priests have reported that others, even persons in important Communist Party posts, have shown great sympathy and helped them secretly.

Different Pictures

There are few church buildings left in the countryside and the small towns. Many were taken away in the early years, and many church buildings were levelled to the ground in the cultural revolution. No visible signs of any religion were left, and the authorities thought that the Christian churches had been finished off. In contrast with the cities, there are no Patriotic Church organisations in the countryside. There are only Christians who have kept their faith and those who, in difficult times, abandoned the faith and now return to the flock. Cities and villages in China present entirely different pictures.

Embarrassed Officials

The local Party officials themselves are in an embarrassing position. Some are Catholics—we know of some who have gone to confession at night to the visiting priests. Non-Christian Party officials know something about the new policy of freedom of religious belief, but they do not know what is allowed and what is not. Christians who go to Mass in the middle of the night cannot be blamed for not turning up for work next morning. They are “building socialism”. The Party officials know, of course, that hundreds of thousands go to the nocturnal Masses. Sometimes they admonish the visiting priests, but these priests have foreign passports, and the local officials do not know exactly what to do. In Christian villages where a local priest is living with his peasant relatives, the Christians go to Mass daily, but, since they belong to what communist jargon calls the “proletarian masses”, the Party officials again do not know how to deal with them.

In September, the Party secretary of a commune in Cheking province wrote in the provincial newspaper that he noticed that some Party members were joining in religious worship. First, he thought that “if some believe in religion, this will not upset the universe”. But when he saw that more and more were turning to religion, he issued an order forbidding them to do so. His order was totally ignored. The question of religion was discussed at a county meeting. There he learned that the right way is to talk to each Party member who had joined a religion and persuade him to quit. He says that this method has been more successful. (*Chekiang Daily*, September 29).

Increase

Totally beyond expectation, in certain dioceses, the number of Christians has not decreased; it has increased. It has increased by birth, for many were born during the cultural revolution when birth-control was ignored, and the children were baptized. Secondly, it has increased by conversion. Young people nowadays, disappointed and discouraged, are turning to religion. In one diocese, a sort of survey was held, and it was found that the number of Catholics had increased by 50%, compared with 30 years ago. One priest wrote to a friend abroad: “Before, we were sowing: now the time of harvest has come”.

This seems to be true of some regions; but other regions are still covered by thick ice. There are dioceses where not a single priest is to be found anywhere. There are places where nuns working in villages have no chance to meet and send word to each other only through travelling friends.

TWO VIEWS ON THE FUTURE

The worst persecution seems to be over. In the 50s, Christians and priests, both Chinese and foreign, were in prison, in chains. During the cultural revolution, priests were beaten to death. Yet, even now, there are still priests and other Christians in prisons and concentration camps, and many who have been freed are living in extreme poverty, have hardly enough to eat, and—many are aged—do not get medical treatment when sick.

Patriotic Priests

The views of those who had chosen the “narrow road” differ from the views of some of the “patriotic” priests who are paid by the State and function in the newly reopened churches.

The former, both Catholics and Protestants, who endured much to maintain the integrity of their faith and who believe that God is above Caesar, have their reservations about the present more relaxed government religious policy. There is, one should note, general scepticism among the non-Christian population, too, even among the now highly-favoured intellectual class, about how long the present more lenient attitude of the Communist Party will last. It is regarded as a measured political expediency, a temporary concession that may be withdrawn any time. All know—this is said in plain language in the official press—that many Party cadres, high and low, are opposed to the more liberal policies in political, economic and cultural matters. Typically, those of the higher intellectuals who can leave the country do leave.

No Retreat

These Christians see that the authorities are wooing all Christians to the newly reopened churches. They hear that

a new organization has been set up, the Catholic Religious Affairs Committee (or the Protestant Association), but they do not know whether this is not just a ruse to induce them to join. They know by experience that once you have joined, you cannot retreat. They see that the name "religious affairs" is identical with the name of the government office ruling religions, the Religious Affairs Bureau. They see also that the head of the new organization on the Protestant side is the very man who is head of the feared Three-Self Movement, and on the Catholic side, that the head is a Patriotic bishop. These organizations, therefore, do not promise much good.

These Christians watch the evolving situation carefully. They see the erosion of Marxism, even within the Party ranks. The Party is abandoning the Mao ways of ruling the country and is in search of new political and economic formulae. The situation of the Church can change, one priest has written, only if the whole system changes: humanly speaking, we have no other hope. Catholics have great confidence in Our Lady and speak of some private revelations promising a better future.

Taiwan

Some priests functioning in the newly opened churches of the Patriotic Association have been thinking differently since the May-June national Catholic conference. These priests believe, and say, even to foreign visitors, that as soon as the Vatican's ties with Taiwan have been cut, relations with Rome will be normalized. The Patriotic Church, they say, is an Association only, a political organ; it is not the Church. That is why the new organ, the Catholic Religious Affairs Committee, was established. Fu, the newly created bishop of Peking, the mouthpiece of the Patriotic Church in Peking, repeats this often when speaking to foreign visitors.

Among Protestants, the same things are being said: the Christian Three-Self Movement is only a Movement; the Religious Affairs Association is the real thing.

It is not easy to understand how the Religious Affairs Organizations can be the authentic church. At the Catholic and Protestant national conferences, it was not the religious

leaders but the heads of the Communist Party's United Front Bureaus who outlined what the new organs were supposed to do. Their tasks, as outlined by the Party men, are the same political tasks that the Catholic Patriotic Association and the Christian Patriotic Movement are supposed to carry out. Nor were the old patriotic organizations abolished. A document issued by the Three-Self Movement on March 1 stated explicitly that the Three-Self Patriotic Movement will not be abolished. Are not these new organizations meant merely to bring under the umbrella of the government the Christians who have hitherto refused to join the patriotic organizations?

A Political Branch

Some of the priests and pastors functioning in the newly opened churches assert, as we said above, that the patriotic association is merely a political branch of the church. But why does the church need a political branch? Would not the government's Religious Affairs Bureau be enough — even too much — to control religious activities?

This throwing out of the idea of a lateral organization, that of religious affairs, was not without effect. It acted as an antitoxin to quiet the qualms of conscience of patriotic priests and pastors. They see in it a ray of hope that the Church may be able to run her own affairs. The new hope has a mesmerizing effect on priests, who, in their hearts, desire reconciliation with Rome, but dare not break with the Patriotic Church. It is lost to view that Peking is now engaged in intensive psychological warfare against Taiwan; that the government needs now, when China has no real leader, the co-operation of all; and that it wants to have a good image abroad.

The political aims of the Government are not the same as they were 30 years ago. It may be recalled that, in the early 50s, Chou En-lai asked Catholics to cut all their political ties with the Vatican, but not their spiritual ties. A few years later, the spiritual ties were cut. Chou En-lai, faithful to the Marxist notion of truth, was not untruthful. In the earlier period, the Party wanted only the cutting of political ties (were there any "political ties"?) not yet the cutting of spiritual ties.

Today, the purpose is demoralization of the public in Taiwan, and the policy has been turned upside-down. If Rome will abandon Taiwan, China can have political ties with the Vatican. In religious matters, on the contrary, as the Government has stated firmly, the Church in China must be independent from Rome. Government spokesmen never tire of repeating that foreign influence cannot be tolerated — even in the case of Protestants who have no dogmatic ties with their founding churches. Would this change if the Vatican were to close its Nunciature in Taipei?

CONCLUSION

The present situation seems ambiguous. On the one hand, some churches have been reopened in the cities, and the local officials tolerate religious gatherings in the countryside. Some priests have been rehabilitated, others are in prison. Religious affairs committees have been set up; but the patriotic organizations have not been disbanded.

Some think the ambiguity deliberate. A semblance of freedom is being created as a means of sorting out who is who, who joins the government-run organizations, who will not. Others think that now, when so many things are changing in China, the leadership is sounding out new ways of solving the insoluble religious question.

Is the religious policy of the Party really changing? Will Christians be free to practise their religion, to preach Christ to people, at least those who are not in the Communist Party? Will Christians be allowed to live in the Christian world - brotherhood and Catholics under the universal Pastor? Will the Marxist tenets on religion be abandoned?

Only God knows the future. Marxism in China may disappear. If it does not disappear, there will be no need for haste. The Marxist-trained mind must be understood. About the concept of time there is a substantial difference between Christians and Marxists. For Christians, and non-Marxists in general, time means the present and eternity. A good Marxist believes in the dialectic march of history.

What is true today may not be true tomorrow. Truth is what helps to achieve the sublime political aim. This difference in the meaning of time and truth is the source of frequent Christian misunderstanding of Marxist aims.

The Future of the Church

Outside China, many religious communities are discussing the present and the future of the Church in China. The prayers and the attention of many people have turned to China. Whether any of the discussions, plans and projects formed abroad will ever influence the future of the Church in China is another matter. Probably it matters little whether those outside China are for or against the Patriotic Church. Outside views and trends are unlikely to influence government policies. For Christians, the future of the Church is a central issue. To the Government in Peking and the Chinese Communist Party, religions matter little.

The Letter of the Hopei conference seems to indicate that, under a surface of tolerance, the policy is hardening. Gatherings of non-Patriotic Christians are tolerated, visiting priests coming from abroad who say Masses in their villages are not particularly molested. Not yet. Nevertheless, the Hopei Letter quoted above had a threatening tone. These priests are "reactionary forces coming from abroad who spread rumours, incite discord and create splits". Their visits do indeed confirm the faith of those who have not joined the government-run organizations.

Christian opinion outside China is visibly swinging towards the Patriotic Church. The world press dilates on religious services in the large cities. The other side of the picture, the witnessing for Christ in the countryside, and in the invisible "villages" in the cities get a poor press. Confidential information can rarely be published.

Reconciliation

In some Christian circles, it is felt that the present measures of religious freedom are only the first steps towards further liberalization. The newly opened churches, Patriotic or not, should therefore be helped. All Christians in China should be encouraged to forget their past grievances and unite. One should work, as a leading Catholic observer wrote, for the "reconciliation of the Church in China" (as if Christians who do not join the Patriotics are less Chinese).

One should hope for the better. But whether it is better that all Christians bend, or whether it would be better for

the future of the Church in China to have a fully Christian life without government bondage, is a question to be considered with care. (What is the difference between the Pax Movements in the East European communist countries and the Patriotic Associations in China ?) The maintenance, at any price, of the purity of the faith is not senseless intransigence.

Depth of Faith

It would be regrettable if the Church around the world were to forget the testimony of the faith of Christians in China. Whatever the future may bring, a memorable page has been written, and is still being written, in the history of the Church in China.

Throughout the centuries, the Church has suffered many severe persecutions. What has happened during the past 30 years is unique. Under the 18th century Manchu emperors, at the time of the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, the persecutions were directed primarily against the foreign missionaries. This time, there were no foreigners; they had been expelled before the great storm rose. The majority of Chinese bishops, priests and faithful stood firm and were ready to be outcasts from society, to suffer prison and labour camps, and even death. The Church in China has passed the supreme test. The Chinese Christians remained faithful, even at the price of being called, like Thomas More and Fisher 400 years ago in England, disloyal, non-patriotic traitors to their own country.

The testimony of Christians has been an eye-opener for many people in China. Now, when the columns of the Mao-edifice are crumbling, many non-Christians see that the Christians' faith and their true love of the country did not bend under harsh conditions.

The year 1980 has offered much material for reflection and much to pray for.

Liturgical Abuse in U.S.

JAMES HITCHCOCK

(Acknowledgments to *Integrity*)

A FEW weeks ago my fellow columnist Father William Smith coined the term "Winegate" to describe the apparent fact that the United States Catholic Conference has a position on the reception of communion in both kinds which is at odds with the official Vatican policy on the same matter. Father Smith wondered if there were people in the U.S.C.C. who for some reason do not want us to know what the Vatican is saying about liturgy.

Anybody with even the slightest acquaintance with the Church in America knows that liturgical abuses are widespread. Ironically, they appear to be most severe in certain religious communities, the very people who in a sense are charged by the Church with official responsibility for the proper celebration of the liturgy.

Anyone who reflects on the fact a little also realizes that these abuses are not accidental. They crystalize all the most serious faults of American Catholicism at present, including a seemingly permanent grudge against Rome and an insistence that there is an "American Church" with its own character and spirit, for whom homegrown liturgy is the proper expression.

This is not, however, merely a case of local abuses which the authorities are unable to control. In many instances, especially in religious communities, superiors tolerate these abuses and even actively encourage them. In at least a few instances bishops do the same. Finally, as already noted, the position of the United States Catholic Conference is at best ambiguous.

Last spring the Pope issued a strong and inspiring letter on the Eucharist, which was followed by a letter from the Congregation for the Sacraments indicating proper norms for its celebration and pointing out abuses.

In America prominent people fell all over themselves denouncing the document. Father Carl Last, executive director of the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commis-

sions, called it "alarmist and reactionary". Father Daniel Coughlin, director of the Office of Divine Worship for the Archdiocese of Chicago, termed it "negative". That was also the burden of two columns syndicated to the diocesan press by Father Richard McBrien, who is the new chairman of the theology department at the University of Notre Dame. Father McBrien insisted that most American Catholics are comfortable with things the Vatican considers abuses, like priests not wearing vestments or communion bread made of something other than flour and water. A headline in the *New York Times* announced "Black Catholic Congregation Ignores Vatican Formalism".

Those who did not openly attack the document did their best to render it inoperative. The director of National Catholic News Service, the bishops' official agency, was quoted as saying that not many people even knew about the document. Various other liturgists said it did not apply in the United States because the abuses it detailed simply do not occur here.

As Father Smith pointed out in his column of June 22, Vatican directives at present specify that communion under both kinds is not to be administered routinely but only on special occasions. Yet American Catholics have been led to believe, even by the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, that the approval of Rome is not needed for the practice and that communion in both kinds may be given on all Sundays and holy days.

In June the archdiocese of St. Louis, in view of the Vatican policy, decided to postpone general administration of communion in both kinds. But Father John Gurrerie, associate director of the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, undercut the archdiocese's decision by telling the secular press that Vatican approval is not necessary.

When N.C. News distributed to the diocesan press its summary of the contents of the Vatican's letter, it omitted reference to the proper confection of the eucharistic bread, an omission possibly not unrelated to the fact that in some places in this country there is controversy over precisely this point, with local authorities claiming the right to use "bread" not in conformity with official specifications.

Pope John Paul's letter had high praise for the Latin liturgy and urged that it be celebrated with regularity, so that all Catholics will have an opportunity to participate in it. This exhortation is being almost universally ignored, and inquiries about the matter from interested lay people are routinely met with evasive replies from liturgical officials.

Interestingly, last April, Cardinal G. Emmett Carter, archbishop of Toronto, issued a very strong pastoral letter urging, and indeed commanding, proper adherence to liturgical regulations and an end to abuses. This is interesting in part because of the reputation the Canadian bishops have for being more "advanced" than the American bishops.

In matters liturgical as well as in other things, we increasingly see in the United States a pattern whereby local Church authorities use their power to undercut the positions of the universal Church. Often they claim freedom for themselves while imposing their own policies on unwilling or unsuspecting lay people.

ADOLESCENT

I will go to the altar of God,
To God who gives joy to my youth,
I would if I could, had my teachers not said
As did Pilate to Christ, "What is truth?"

From a third collection of poems by David Read, published by the Angelus Press, P.O. Box 1187 Dickinson, Texas 77539, U.S.A.; obtainable also from the Author at 48, Howitt Road, Belsize Park, London N.W.3. Price £1.25; U.S.A. \$3.00.

The recent history of the small country of El Salvador provides a clear example of extreme right-wing oppression. Even moderate attempts at rational social reform are labelled as "left wing" and met with extreme violence.

Fr. Sobrino, who teaches theology at the Jesuit University in El Salvador, describes and analyses what is going on. He gave the following address at a recent conference in Detroit, U.S.A. The film he refers to is about the violent repression of the Salvadorean people. Acknowledgements to *Social Survey*.

Death and Hope in El Salvador

JON SOBRINO, S.J.

THIS might end as a theological meditation. As when we are in a chapel, we are in front of very serious things; important things that one has to analyse. But, in the last analysis, I think we have to meditate on them.

I am not going to describe what the Church in El Salvador is doing. That would take many hours. I am going to give the general impressions I get from the Church in El Salvador. You have heard a lot about the vision of the Church there. I am going to talk about the reality.

The World Outside

The first point is to ask ourselves this important question. What is the basic fact about the Church in El Salvador? I would say it is the world outside of the Church: the type of world that was shown in the film on El Salvador. The world outside becomes as we Christians and theologians say, a sign of the times.

The world in El Salvador is characterized right now by two words: the first one is death, and the second is life—

or, more exactly, the *hope* for life. Exploitation is too weak a word to describe the situation in El Salvador right now. People in El Salvador are not just exploited, which they are; they are not only oppressed, which they are. They are people who get killed, assassinated.

The Church has incarnated herself in this world. Again, *in this world*. It's not just that we accept living among beautiful volcanoes in El Salvador, though that would be incarnation. It is much more profound than that. The Church, I believe, has incarnated herself in this world of death. And I would like to quote Archbishop Romero, because I think he put it very well. He said, two months before he was assassinated. "I am proud that Christians have mixed their blood with the blood of the people".

We can talk about incarnation on many levels, and rightly so. On the cultural level, we can say that the Church must be Indian, the Church must be Black, the Church must be Woman—that is all part of incarnating the Church Herself (or Itself?). But I think the depth of the incarnation doesn't come to light until one considers this further type of incarnation: sharing with the people of El Salvador what is most profound and most basic—death. Although this sounds tragic, it is not rhetoric.

Who are the Poor?

This has helped us to solve a theoretical, and a practical, important question. Who *are* the poor in El Salvador? We all say that the Church should make an option for the poor. The Latin American bishops said that at Medellin and at Puebla. I don't have to explain that by "the poor" is not meant the rich who, somehow or other, are poor in spirit.

The Puebla documents say that the poor are the peasants, the workers, the children with no hope of surviving, the elderly people. But, for us in El Salvador, the poor, the image of the poor are the dead, which, by the way, should be very clear, *a priori*, if we would consider the roots of our Christian faith. If Jesus Christ is "the poor", it is not so much because he was probably born into a family of low income. If he is "the poor", it is because he ended as he ended—crucified, dead.

Although it may be a bit macabre, I want to remind you of a few facts so that you have an experience, at least from a distance, of what it means to be poor today in El Salvador.

In this year, in the first six months of 1980, approximately 6,000 or 7,000 people have been assassinated. What you saw in the film was just a glimpse. And if, in a country like ours, with a population of five million, 6,000 or 7,000 have been assassinated, that is the equivalent of 300,000 to 350,000 United States citizens being assassinated. This is our reality at the moment. This is the type of poverty we live in. This is the type of exploitation and oppression we have.

On the 14th of May, at the Sumpul River, 600 peasants were killed. 600 is more or less the number of people in this meeting. Can you imagine if tomorrow, in the newspapers, the headline would read, "600 people have been assassinated in Detroit in five hours, in one place". I imagine everybody in the United States—the President, Congress, everyone—would be very anxious to know what happened. Well, that is what happened in El Salvador: 600 people were killed at one place in four or five hours. How were they killed? They were tortured; children were flipped into the air, bayoneted and thrown into the river . . . A fisherman from Honduras found the corpses of five babies in his net. Things like that . . .

Truth

I think death is the reality for peasants, for workers, and also for other people who don't usually get killed in civilized societies—people like school teachers. I don't know if there are many here; but this year alone, 32 school teachers have been assassinated. The same is true for medical doctors. Usually, these people do not get killed. They are professionals. As far as I know, at least 14 doctors have been assassinated because someone suspected that a particular doctor might have helped, or could sometime help heal someone from the Left. And at times, these doctors have been assassinated doing surgery. There have been other things: wounded people in hospitals have been assassinated, and this is not normal in civilized socie-

ies. Some people who have been wounded in the struggles get to the hospitals, and, at least in seven cases that I know of, paramilitary groups, in connivance with the armed forces, with the government, have gone into the hospitals and killed them.

Those Who Die

What I am saying is, I think, true. Who are the poor? Those who die.

To my joy, and I say this in all humility, I think that, by and large, the Church has incarnated herself in that type of world. Just to give a few examples, seven priests have been murdered in El Salvador in the last three years, and also Archbishop Romero, who was a very good friend of mine. A few days before I came here, a theology student, a diocesan seminarian, who was going to be ordained a month from now, was preparing a little chapel where he was going to say his first Mass. He was there with eleven peasants. They were all assassinated. Many priests have suffered, have been threatened with death. Of course, many lay preachers among the peasants have been assassinated—so many of them, I couldn't give you the figures. Lay catechists have been assassinated. Residences of men and women religious have been searched, been bombed at times, or machine-gunned. The radio station of the archdiocese has had at least four bombings. The same thing has happened to the weekly diocesan newspaper office. And we Jesuits (though I don't want to go on about us, or me) have been threatened as a group, with death—once in 1977 and once in 1980. Father Rutilio Grande, the first priest murdered, was a Jesuit. About 11 bombs have exploded in our University. But certainly what has happened to us, as you can imagine, has been very minimal. We, as Jesuits, have power, have international connections. So you can imagine that, if these things happen to us, what happens to the peasants, who have no power?

Persecution

The end result of this point is that the institutional Church in El Salvador has been persecuted. (You know, when people talk about the "institutional Church", I

understand what is said, though not quite, because what is the institutional Church.) This Church has incarnated Herself among the poor. And that is the most important thing that I want to say of the Church in El Salvador. If I sound triumphalistic, I don't mean to. (I know our weaknesses well, don't worry about that), but, on the other hand, I have to tell the truth.

Now, the next point is: What has the Church done for the poor and what have the poor done for the Church?

What has the Church done for the poor? Well, Scripture says very clearly that the poor are the privileged ones of God. You can say this, you can write about it, but the point is to make the poor the principals of action and of understanding. I think this is the first thing the Church has done for our country—telling everybody, the government, the armed forces, the intellectuals, etc., that the poor are the privileged ones of God. If you want to know what is truth, what is good, what is just and unjust, the first thing you have to do, the Church says, is look at the poor. This is very significant.

Basic Rights

I believe the second thing the Church has done is to state very clearly that we have to defend the rights of the poor. I think that it is obvious enough that when we talk about rights in El Salvador, we are not talking about civil rights in abstract ways, but the most basic right: the right to breathe, the difference between living and dying. Defending human rights has meant defending the right to *live*. And I think the Church has done that by denouncing death, and, positively, by being to some extent (and certainly under Archbishop Romero) this phrase we hear so often, "the voice of those who have no voice".

The Church has defended other human rights, especially defending the right of the peasants and workers to organize. That might sound very simple, but, in El Salvador, the peasants do not have a legal right to organize. Why the Church has defended this right is very important. It is not only a right which belongs to human nature, like being free to play cards, but if the poor, especially the peasants and the workers, don't get organised, they will be more easily victims of oppression.

Another thing the Church has done for the country, I believe, is to go a step further and say that the poor should get some substantial part in politics. I won't talk today about what that might mean specifically—for instance, whether there should be a Christian party. No. But at Medellin and Puebla, the bishops said that, if the poor are not makers of their own destiny, nobody will do it for them. Not the government, not the theologians, not the Church, not the North Americans, not the South Americans. The people, the poor of each country, they are the basic makers of their own destiny. And that means they should have a certain amount of power.

Not to Idealize

And finally, although everything I said before is true—the poor are the privileged ones—the Church has not tried to idealize the poor. Archbishop Romero was very free to criticize what, according to him, was wrong, even among the poor. Though they are the way to learn what is true, what is good, what is bad, they also can make mistakes. Of course, the Archbishop especially criticized the rich and the oppressors. He once called President Romero [no relation] a liar. And, after most members of the first Junta had resigned, he said in a Sunday homily, “I wonder why the Minister of Defence has not resigned. He should”. So, of course, the denunciation was and is directed especially to the rich, but also to the poor. At times I have the impression that many of us feel that we are saints. I think we also need criticism, even as the poor struggling for liberation need criticism, and I think the Church has done that.

Now, what has the Church learned from the poor? That is, to me, more important, because we are used to the Church as teacher—*Mater et Magistra*. But, the Church, the theologians, the bishops learning from someone—that is almost incredible. And I think the Church *has* learned from the poor.

What has she learned? Well, first, I think, she has learned what sin is. I believe the Church has learned that sin is “that which brings about death”. This, of course, is very traditional. Jesus Christ died because of our sins. Now you can interpret that very transcendently, and

very historically. Jesus Christ died because some people killed him. So sin is to kill the Son of God. And sin is to kill the children of God. Well, "how simple!" you say, "you don't have to study too much to understand that". But, it is curious. You have to live—at least I have to live—in a situation like ours to understand this: that sin is that which brings about death. That is why, also in the best theological tradition, sin can be *mortal*. Mortal sin so named because it gives death. Of course, we used to say, with fright, mortal sin gives death to the sinner, a spiritual death which, I believe, means a total failure of the one who commits the sin. But the tragic thing about sin is that it is not just a death somewhere *inside* somebody, but it is objective: it is there. People get killed. So that is the first lesson. You are with the poor, you see them dying; you say, well that *can't* be God's will—that *has* to be sin.

Sanctity

The second thing is the opposite. I think the Church has learned what grace is, sanctity—whatever you want to call it. I will say that, primarily, the Church has learned that nobody has greater love than he who gives up his life for others. That is St. John's Gospel—nothing new. It is not Liberation Theology, or Marxism. It is the Gospel. This type of love is the most important expression of sanctity or of holiness. And again, this is important: not all of us get killed (I hope not!), but you begin to understand Christianity, the most profound roots of Christian faith. You begin to understand holiness and sanctity in the readiness to give to others, even to give up your own life.

Third, I think the Church has learned what the following of Jesus means, which is a praxis of justice, within a conflict, to bring about the Kingdom of God—but like the servant of Yahweh, as he is described in Isaiah.

Idolatry

I think the Church has learned, I believe and I hope, the most important thing about the True God. You never learn that completely, of course, and you forget. But, as in our problem, sometimes one has the impression that

people outside of Latin America or outside of El Salvador think "the Christians down there, and even the theologians, or priests, or bishops, are doing good, on, say, the level of social ethics and things like that". Well, I think it is more profound than that. I think that what is at stake here is *faith in God. Who is really God?* That is the problem. And we have learned, I hope, to understand the question—or better, the mystery of God—not in opposition to atheism (the denial that there is some sort of absolute), but in opposition to idolatry. That is our problem: not people who say, "I don't believe in God, I don't see him". Our problem is *Idolatry*.

What do I mean by idolatry? I mean the existence of real idols, gods who, in order to survive, demand victims. You know, in the old mythology, Moloch is that type of God. The cult of Moloch was to kill people for him. Now this is not mythology, it isn't poetry: there are gods in our country, as in your country. For us, the main ones are the National Security State, absolutized capitalism, and things like that. They demand for themselves the characteristics which only the True God could demand for himself, namely ultimateness, that which is untouchable. Well, I think the National Security State, absolutized capitalism, etc. are idols which demand victims. That is the ultimate reason why some people get killed. So, for us to believe in God is very profoundly an option *not just for life, but to give life to other people*.

A Criterion

And we found, *a posteriori*, a criterion to see if we believe in the True God or in idols. As, I said, atheism is not important *at the moment*. If we see that we, as Christians or non-Christians, are helping those who bring death, then we are in connivance with them, consciously or unconsciously. Then we shall have to admit that we are idolators, we worship idols.

The first, the most fundamental thing about believing in God is not just to love life—we all do that—but to work so that there *is* life.

The second thing about God is that, in a metaphorical way, he is a crucified God; somehow or other, the idea

that God is suffering belongs to our faith in God, I think. And lastly, that God is a liberating God. That this experience of God also brings about hope.

Another point in this reflection is something which, for me, is very important. I think we have heard, in this conference, a lot about different groups being oppressed, being exploited. But I don't think we have heard much about how to live this being exploited, this being oppressed. We do have to become aware that we are exploited, but once this state is reached, I think the next important question, at least from a Christian point of view, is *how we live this being exploited*.

It is very understandable that someone who is exploited looks for revenge, for example. That would be one way of living your being exploited. You could live it with resentment, or resignation. Now my point is that I think people in El Salvador live this being exploited with *hope*.

Not Just Optimism

Hope is not just optimism—"Okay, don't worry, at the end everything will be all right". No, certainly not, we have had enough historical experience not to be optimists. Hope is something different. Hope is not a cheap joy, either—you know, "Okay, we suffer during the day, but at night let's get together and sing". It's not that either, although I am very happy when we sing at night, and I do too. Hope is really believing that the suffering implied in the fight for liberation and for justice is *salvific*.

Now that is, I think, what this model of the servant of God drawn from Isaiah tells us "My servant will do justice for the world" (42:1). He is sent for something very positive; namely, to do justice. The last song of Isaiah recognizes that, precisely because he has been sent to do this, he suffers and dies. But not only that: in doing this, the servant takes away the sins of the world. This is not just a theological conception. If a person, group or whole people (by and large) have this experience, then this suffering is *really* salvific. Then there is a type of hope, and I mean historical hope—not just one in heaven, but that we will celebrate Christmas of this year in peace—which gives hope to those who suffer.

Joy

I have listened to Gustavo Gutierrez talk about joy, about how subversive joy is. I really like that idea. I would say that the type of joy we have at the present moment would be best described by the word hope, a *deep* hope. The fact that most Salvadoreans are Christians, at least culturally, and many of them also explicitly, has helped us to go through a political struggle with hope. On the other hand, it has helped the people of the Church to see that the whole people doesn't despair. I think that it is a sign of the times for the Church to see where the only logical thing to expect would be despair, not despair, but *hope* arises.

Profoundly Christian

Just to make a final remark. I think something profoundly Christian is going on in El Salvador. I don't think the question is whether the Church is going to be given the credit for that—that is a senseless question. This process includes many Christians and many Church people, but not all of them.

Why is this profoundly Christian? I should like to explain in the words of a second century theologian, St. Irenaeus. I'll say it in Latin and then I'll translate it for you: *Gloria Dei vivens homo*. The glory of God, God being God—what is it historically?—the living man. That people *live*. Archbishop Romero said at the University of Louvain in February, a month before he was killed: "In El Salvador, we reformulate that sentence from Irenaeus. *Gloria Dei vivens pauper*". The glory of God, that God *be* God, is that the poor live.

If someone is able to put these two things together, not theoretically, but in his or her life experience, the glory of God—God—and letting him be God, *and* that people live, that the poor live; if you put these two things together, then I believe you have faith, which is both transcendent and historical. You have a sort of life and praxis which is both Christian and Latin American, and you have only one single experience: you are loyal to a history which is the history of God.

Book Review

A QUESTION OF PRIORITIES

The Papacy in the Modern World by J. Derek Holmes; Burns & Oates, London; pp. 275; £9.95.

In this book the Author, who is Professor of Church History at Ushaw College, Durham, takes his story of the Papacy in the modern world right into our own times. The year 1978 sees the end of what is in many ways a fascinating and most readable account of the trials that beset the Church and its rulers from 1910, through two world wars, the uneasy peace between, the uncertain years that covered the aftermath of the second; then and up and into the Second Vatican Council with its own troubled aftermath, which is not yet done. A previous book of Dr. Holmes entitled, *The Triumph of the Holy See*, examined the Popes and their policies from the time of the French Revolution until the outbreak of the First World War. The present volume is its appropriate sequel.

There is a great deal to be learnt from it, not only from a perusal of its pages, but from quiet reflection on their contents, for the questions raised in this volume are not yet answered and may well not be for some time to come. One finds throughout a mastery of fact, which is impressive, the more so in view of the limited space which the Author has seen fit to allow himself. Two hundred and seventy-five pages give very little scope for much more than bare narrative when the endeavour is made to set in true perspective a period as fraught with problems as that covered by Dr. Holmes. Despite this difficulty, he gives in the space of approximately fifty pages an objective and extremely effective account of the Papacy and the problems it faced during the Second World War. This must rank, I would think, amongst the best studies in short of the Papacy and the Church during those terrible years that have yet appeared. In particular, the vicious *canards* thrown at Pope Pius XII for his supposed indifference to the fate of the Jews at Hitler's hands are here triumphantly repudiated. In the words of a former Israeli Consul

in Italy cited on page 158 of his book by Dr. Holmes.

"... the Catholic Church saved more Jewish lives during the war than all the other churches, religious institutions and rescue organizations put together. Its record stands in startling contrast to the achievements of the International Red Cross and the Western Democracies . . . The Holy See, the Nuncios and the entire Catholic Church saved some 400,000 Jews from certain death".

There is a sense in which it is true to say of this book, without taking a thing from its obvious merits, that it raises more questions than it answers. The pages that deal with Church-State relations in Fascist Italy provide a case in point. Is the Church, within such a situation, to take as its first priority, the preservation of its structured and institutional self (I use the phrase in *no* derogatory fashion; simply descriptively) or is it to stand in defence of those oppressed by a totalitarian regime, upholding their rights as human beings, whatever their race or religion and at no matter what cost to itself? The question unfortunately is of increasing application in today's world. One thinks, for example, of *apartheid* in South Africa or of the millions of poor children whom Brazil's economic revolution has forced to live rough on the streets of that country's major cities. What line is the Church to take in this kind of situation, to say nothing of so many others that could be cited? What must her priority be? I know that neat answers in favour of self-preservation can be given by good men who believe most sincerely that negotiation at the top can do far more for the Church than confrontation at the grass roots with those who oppress their fellow men, each one of whom is made in the image of God. I do not doubt the sincerity of those who hold this view. It has prevailed within the Church for centuries. I am in no way sure myself that, today, it is appropriate or correct.

There is on page 172 of Dr. Holmes' book a quotation which seems to me to sum up the outlook—the kind of thinking from the heart—of so many who would be happy to see the Church range herself more firmly than appears to have been her wont on the side of the oppressed, with her priests in amongst those for whom suffering is their

daily lot; for Christ's sake sharing their burdens with them, from whatever quarter those burdens come. The quotation is from the speech of a Deputy, made during the deliberations of Italy's Constituent Assembly in 1946 in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War that left Italy beaten and broken, trying to pick itself up. The deputy's words moved me deeply. Here they are:

"Because it is in men's minds, in their hearts; because it pervades the consciousness of the people . . . because at a certain moment, in the years of ruthless oppression, we perceived that the sole newspaper which still spoke with the voice of freedom—with the voice of *our* freedom, of the freedom that is common to all free men—was the *Osservatore Romano*; because we knew from experience that he who bought the *Osservatore Romano* was exposing himself to the risk of being beaten up . . . because, when the racial persecutions began, the Church ranged itself against the persecutors and took the part of the oppressed; because when the German were seeking out our sons in order to torture them and shoot them, they, whatever their Party, found sanctuary . . . in presbyteries and monasteries . . . It was from these things, and not from the Lateran Pacts, that religious peace sprang . . . This brotherhood of the humble, the suffering and the oppressed in the face of the oppressors . . . has given back to Italy religious peace. That peace is in men's hearts. Do not destroy it, do not endanger it . . . by paltry, pettifogging subterfuges".

Those words are from the heart. Their speaker and millions like him will be captured for Christ once and forever by a Church known through the example of her priests for her tireless labours on behalf of the poor and oppressed; without concern for what might be called the claims of ecclesiastical privilege and domination. Which way, then, is it going to be. Where are the priorities to be set? This question, I believe, stands at the heart of the debate within the Church today. Recognised as such or not, it is there. On the answer given to it, the future of the world and of the Church within it, very largely depends.

—Paul Crane, S.J.

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Dr. Little is a Roman Catholic and is known to many as the author of "Treason at Westminster".

**REV. PETER MANTON: "The Anglican Church
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